



ECHO

Ecological Health Organization, Inc.

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March 1, 2010

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To: Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and Members of the Environment Committee.

Re: Support Bills: HB 5126—Establishing a Chemical Innovations Institute at the University of Connecticut
HB5130—An Act Concerning Child Safe Products

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and members of the Environment Committee, my name is Carolyn Wysocki and as President of ECHO, (Ecological Health Organization, Inc.) I am here to voice our support for HB 5126 and HB 5130.

Almost 20 years ago ECHO was formed as a statewide nonprofit, advocacy, support, education and referral organization for people with Multiple Chemical Syndrome (MCS) and for others who care about its prevention. MCS is a chronic disorder as a result of a massive single exposure to a chemical such as a pesticides or a cumulative building up of toxic chemicals in our bodies over a period of time. We develop increased reactions to various chemicals found in products such as pesticides, building materials, appliances, cosmetics, computers, fragrances, carpets, and cleaning products and exhibit respiratory, neurological, muscular, cardio-vascular, thoracic etc. symptoms, dependent on the chemical exposure. There is no known cure for MCS and the most effective treatment found to date is avoidance of toxic chemicals. A difficult task in today's world.

We and our families are being exposed to toxic chemicals on a daily bases in our home, school and work environments. It is only after the fact when there is sufficient numbers of people with an illness that some corrective action is done like removing the product or chemical from the market as was done with dioxin, mercury, asbestos, lead, PCBs, etc. I am not only speaking about people with MCS but those children and adults who are contributing to a growing epidemic of chronic diseases and disorders that include cancers, asthma, learning and developmental disabilities, birth defects, reproductive disorders such as infertility, and neuro-degenerative disorders such as Parkinson's disease.

Since 2001, the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has been tracking the levels of synthetic chemicals in the blood and urine of average Americans – our so-called "body burden." These studies have found that all of us are contaminated with household and industrial chemicals and pesticides – some of which can build up in our bodies, our blood, fat tissues, muscle, bone, brain or other organs. For example, PCBs and DDT, two persistent chemicals that have been banned for 30 years, are still found in nearly all people tested by the CDC. Other chemicals lodge in our bodies for only a short time before being excreted, but continuous exposure to such chemicals means they are usually present in our bodies.

<http://www.chemicalbodyburden.org/whatisbb.htm>

Just as the canaries in the coal mines, people with MCS are the human canaries of the 21 Century, warning that toxic chemicals are effecting public health. On behalf of ECHO, we owe it to our children and grandchildren to provide a safe environment, safer substances, safer alternatives, and safer manufacturing processes, to reduce hazardous substances in consumer products, at workplaces and businesses, in homes, in our land, water and in the air. As a founding member of the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut, ECHO supports establishing an Innovation Institute that will help lessen the risk of people becoming ill from toxic chemicals. By replacing toxic chemicals with safer alternatives we can help reduce the number of potential people who could develop MCS or cancer, learning disabilities, asthma, reproductive and neurodegenerative disorders. By helping Connecticut manufacturers make the transition to safer substances and processes, we can reduce illnesses and health care costs, improve worker, community and environmental public health. The good news is that the harm caused by toxic chemicals is preventable and

"Prevention is My Intention."

Sincerely,

Carolyn Wysocki President, ECHO

MISSION

To safeguard the health and well-being of the environment and its inhabitants.